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(54) Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR SINGLE-POINT TO FIXED-MULTIPOINT DATA COMMUNICATION			
(57) Abstract			
<p>Systems and methods for single-point to fixed-multipoint communication. The invention dynamically allocates bandwidth based on traffic demands, thus providing efficient bandwidth utilization, particularly with bursty or time sensitive data traffic. A system includes a Base Station and a plurality of Remote Stations. The Base Station transmits information to the Remote Stations via a Forward Channel and the Remote Stations transmit information via a Reverse Channel. Before transmitting on the Reverse Channel, each of the Remote Stations listens (monitors) the Reverse Channel to ascertain whether any other Remote Station is transmitting. Remote Stations transmit data only when a Remote Station determines that the channel is clear. The Remote Stations listen in sequential order, eliminating the probability of collisions caused by simultaneous transmissions from Remote Stations. The data traffic is accordingly aggregated, thus providing efficient bandwidth utilization.</p>			

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**SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR
SINGLE-POINT TO FIXED-MULTIPOINT DATA
COMMUNICATION**

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The present application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) to provisional application 60/118,662 filed on January 14, 1999, the entirety of which is incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

10 The present invention relates to data communication, and more particularly, to a method and system for single-point to fixed-multipoint communication.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

15 In a conventional single-point to fixed-multipoint data communication system, a base station transmits to fixed remote stations and each of the fixed remote stations, in turn, transmit to the base station. Such systems typically use one or more predetermined and typically internationally adopted communication protocols. These protocols tend to be optimized for particular applications and industries. For example, protocols used for wireless communication tend to be developed and influenced by the telecommunication industry. However, since many of these conventional systems that have communication 20 medium interconnecting the base station to the fixed remote stations are terrestrial (e.g., copper or optical fiber medium) the data communication protocols tend to be developed and/or heavily influenced by the computer industry.

25 A fixed wireless system is generally characterized by a point to multipoint topology where remote stations are fixed at specific locations. Wireless in the Local Loop (WLL) is an example of a point to multipoint topology. Most WLL solutions use a variant one of the major wireless telecommunication protocols such as Frequency Division Multiple Access (FDMA), Time Division Multiple Access (TDMA), or Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA). Systems using these protocols assign and reserve bandwidth for the communication between the remote stations and the base station.

A FDMA-based system assigns a separate channel in an available channel band to each remote station. For instance, in cellular systems these channels are assigned by the base station upon receiving a request for channel from a cellular phone (radio). There is a common channel used for control information that is passed back and forth between the 5 base and remote. A TDMA-based system breaks a channel into time slots. Each remote station is assigned a time slot. If there is no data to be transmitted when the time slot becomes available, the bandwidth is wasted since it is not reallocated to another remote radio. In general, a CDMA-based system uses a non-correlating coding sequence to allow multiple radios to transmit and receive in the same frequency range. In cellular CDMA, a 10 base station assigns a code based on a request from a cell phone. There is a practical limit to the number of codes in use in a sector, thus limiting the number of active channels.

Conventional wireless telecommunication protocols tend to be efficient where there is a continuous flow of information. However, Internet data traffic and modern voice digitizing technology is by its nature bursty in its use of bandwidth. Accordingly, 15 systems using these conventional protocols do not make efficient use of the available channel bandwidth with the bursty data traffic, largely because the assigned channels remain idle whenever their assigned stations are not bursting.

Another drawback associated with existing wireless telecommunications protocols is that they require a base station to communicate and broker bandwidth among the 20 remote stations which causes significant delays. Additionally, these conventional protocols fail to accommodate the various demands of different remote stations at different times because of their inability to dynamically allocate bandwidth based on traffic demand.

Conventional computer-based data communication protocols are typically 25 designed and used for multipoint to multipoint communication. Such protocol are optimized to handle bursty data traffic. Examples of such protocols include Carrier Sense Multiple Access (CSMA) and Carrier Sense Multiple Access/Collision Detection (CSMA/CD) protocols. When optimized, these protocols can make efficient use of the bandwidth. The optimization, however, assumes the multipoint-to-multipoint underlying 30 topology. In addition, because of the lack of channel reservations and due to the

inconsistency of burstiness of data traffic, these protocols fail to adequately support time sensitive data traffic, such as digitized voice, at high utilization rate of their bandwidth.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to systems and methods for efficient single-point to fixed-multipoint data (data and/or digitized voice) communication. The invention overcomes the drawbacks of conventional systems and protocols, particularly with respect to applications with bursty or time sensitive data traffic, by dynamically allocating bandwidth based on traffic demands.

In one embodiment, wireless data communication is provided in context of Internet Protocol Multiple Access (IPMA) system having a Base Station and a plurality of Remote Stations. In operation, the Base Station transmits data packets to the Remote Stations via a Forward Channel and the Remote Stations transmit data packets to the Base Station. Before transmitting on the Reverse Channel, each of the Remote Stations listens to (monitors) the Reverse Channel to ascertain whether any other Remote Station is transmitting. Remote Stations transmit data only when a Remote Station determines that the channel is clear. The Remote Stations listen in sequential order, eliminating the probability of collisions caused by simultaneous transmissions from Remote Stations.

The invention also efficiently and dynamically aggregates data traffic, thus allowing the entire bandwidth to be utilized. For example, when only one of Remote Stations requires bandwidth, the entire bandwidth is allocated to that Remote station. If multiple Remote Stations need bandwidth, the entire bandwidth is allocated according to the needs of those stations. No Remote Station is denied bandwidth nor is bandwidth wasted on a Remote Station that has no data to send with the teaching of the invention. Furthermore, use of the Reverse Channel is achieved without the overhead of brokering, thereby circumventing and associated delays.

Another feature of the invention is that the order in which the Remote Stations listen to the Reverse Channel can be rotated periodically. Thus, equal access for transmission on the Reverse channel is ensured for all Remote Stations.

In another aspect of the invention, Remote Stations are assigned to various zones. Remote Stations in a given zone listen only to other Remote Stations in that zone. This

reduces the hardware cost associated with Remote Stations since zones can be configured for those stations within a close geographical proximity of each other. Alternately, Remote Stations can be grouped in zones based on station type, data traffic type, or access rate requirements for the Reverse Channel.

5 Another advantage of the invention is that constraints on distance from the Base Station are removed. For example, embodiments of the invention allow communication over wireless distances in excess of 50Km from a Base Station in 2 GHz bands.

10 In addition, embodiments of the invention are more efficient than CDMA. For example, if CDMA cellular system carries 30 simultaneous phone conversations in one cell sector, the invention can carry 240 simultaneous phone conversations using only one correlating code.

The foregoing, and other features and advantages of the invention, will be apparent from the following, more particular description of the preferred embodiments of the invention, the accompanying drawings, and the appended claims.

15 **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING FIGURES**

Figure 1 is a topological view of a single-point to fixed-multipoint wireless data communication system in accordance with the invention.

20 Figures 2A and 2B, respectively, are high level views of a half-duplex and a full-duplex system using a Forward Channel and Reverse Channel in accordance with the invention.

Figure 3 is a detailed view of a Forward Channel, a Reverse Channel, and a Clear Channel Assessment phase in accordance with the invention.

25 Figure 4 is a detailed view of a successive series of Forward Channel, Reverse Channel, and Clear Channel Assessment occurrences with Dwell Time rotation in accordance with the invention.

Figure 5 is a detailed view of a successive series of Forward Channel, Reverse Channel, and Clear Channel Assessment occurrences with two-zones in accordance with the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The preferred embodiments of the invention are now described with reference to the figures where like reference numbers indicate like elements. Also in the figures, the left most digit of each reference number corresponds to the figure in which the reference number is first used.

These preferred embodiments are discussed in the context of a single-point to fixed-multipoint wireless data communication in an Internet Protocol Multiple Access (IPMA) system. The invention, however, can be practiced to provide information (e.g., data, digitized voice) for a wide range of Internet applications (e.g., e-mail, various 10 Internet applications, etc.). For example, a single-point station can provide Internet connectivity services to the various fixed-multipoint stations to enable users at these multipoint stations to send and receive e-mail, connect with the World Wide Web, or establish digitized voice communications. Moreover, the invention can be practiced in other applications and embodiments as would be apparent to one skilled in the art. For 15 example, the teachings of the invention can be used in a non-wireless communication medium, such as a copper-based or fiber optics-based communication medium. One such embodiments of the invention, can be a local area network having a single-point to fixed-multipoint topology.

Figure 1 is a topological view of a single-point to fixed-multipoint wireless data 20 communication system 100 in accordance with the invention. System 100 includes a Base Station 102, and a plurality of Remote Stations 104. Communication from and to Base Station 102 and each of the Remote Stations 104 is provided over a Forward Channel (FC) 106 and a Reverse Channel (RC) 108, respectively. In this embodiment, FC 106 and RC 108 are modulated over carrier signals in the 2 GHz frequency range. As 25 would be apparent to one skilled in the art, other types of modulation techniques and carrier signals can be readily utilized with the invention. In this embodiment, Base Station 102 provides an Internet connection and data (e.g., e-mail) can be downloaded to the Remote Stations 104, via FC 106, and Remote Stations 104 can upload data via RC 108.

30 The communication between Base Station 102 and each Remote Station 104 can be conducted with a half- or full-duplex embodiments. Figure 2A is a high level view of

a half-duplex embodiment 200 of the invention. In this embodiment, Base Station 102 first transmits to each Remote Station 104 via FC 106. During this time interval, each Remote Station 104 tunes (switches) to the frequency of FC 106 and receives data packets (or data packet) transmitted by Base Station 102. The time interval allotted for FC 106 is 5 based, in part, on the time requirements for Base Station 102 to transmit (or burst) data and each Remote Stations 104 to receive the data.

Base Station 102 can dynamically communicate with Remote Stations 104 in a number of different addressing schemes. For example, for each FC 106, data packet can be destined for a specific Remote Station 104, all Remote Stations 104, or a subset (pre-assigned group) thereof. Data packets destined for a specific Remote Station are marked by a unique address that is assigned *a priori* to each Remote Station 104. In such an instance, each Remote Station 104 detects FC 106, but only the Remote Station with a matching address will process the received data and the remaining Remote Stations 104 will discard the transmitted data packets. Data packets destined to all Remote Stations 104 are marked by a broadcast address. Upon detection of FC 106, each Remote Station 104 will recognize the broadcast address and process the received data. Data packets destined for a subset of Remote Stations 104 are marked by a special address, thereby 15 providing a semi-broadcast type of communication.

The foregoing addressing scheme of the invention can be readily mapped into 20 higher level protocols, such as the widely used Internet Protocol (IP). In such an embodiment, the address of each Remote Station 104 can correspond to the IP address of that Remote Station 104. Alternatively, the Remote Station IP address itself can be used directly within the addressing scheme of embodiments of the invention. The advantage of 25 this later embodiment is the elimination of added complexity of mapping and the easier interface to the Internet, or other IP networks, via the Base Station 102. Moreover, in such IP embodiments, existing higher level networking communication software and hardware can be utilized with the invention. For instance, data packets that are meant to be sent to all Remote Stations 104 can use the default addressing broadcast scheme of IP. These types of data packets can include control data that can be used for overall system 30 management, provisioning, control, or merely to broadcast user information to the Remote Stations 104. Data packets that are meant to be sent to a specific Remote Station 104 will have the IP address of that specific station. Accordingly, only that specific

Remote Station will unpack that data packet at its networking layer while all other Remote Stations **104** will simply discard that packet. Another advantage of using the IP protocol, as an addressing scheme, is the ability to create zones that correspond to one or more sub-networks of the IP network. Accordingly, such embodiments of the invention
5 can be configured so that a subset of the Remote Stations **104** exist in one IP sub-network or zone.

Returning to Figure 2A, once the time allotted for FC **106** has expired, each Remote Station **104** switches to listen to the frequency of RC **108** and enters into a Clear Channel Assessment (CCA) **202** phase. During this time, each Remote Station **104**
10 listens to RC **108** to ascertain whether other Remote Stations **104** are transmitting. If a first Remote Station, which has data packets to send to Base Station **102**, ascertains that none of the other Remote Stations **104** are transmitting, the first Remote Station transmits its data packets to Base Station **102** until the time allotted for RC **108** expires. Since each Remote Station **104** listens to all transmissions originating from any other Remote
15 Stations **104**, each Remote Station **104** detects the transmission of the first Remote Station and refrains from transmitting. Further discussion of these features of the invention is provided below. Once the time allotted for RC **108** expires, all Remote Stations **104** switch their listening frequency again to re-tune to FC **106** and Base Station **102** begins to transmit another occurrence of FC **106** to Remote Stations **104**.

20 In accordance with the invention, each Remote Station **104** thereby determines whether or not to transmit data (by monitoring the RC **108**). In this regard, the embodiments of the invention do not require Base Station **102** to broker or provide access to RC **108** among Remote Stations **104**. Accordingly, any propagation delay associated with the brokering is circumvented.

25 To facilitate the requisite handshaking and low error rate communication between Base Station **102** and Remote Stations **104**, these stations are synchronized. Methods for synchronizing communication systems are well known in the art and can be readily employed with the embodiments of this invention. For example, synchronization can be achieved during the initial configuration of system **100** and can be maintained by
30 broadcast control packets transmitted from Base Station **102**.

The invention also provides Guard Times (GT) **204** to accommodate for delays associated with embodiments thereof and to optimize each embodiment to specifications of that embodiment (e.g., extremely low error rate, minimized synchronization time, etc.). As noted before, the invention can be practiced, with various applications, topologies, and 5 station designs. Each embodiment will require the compensation for propagation delays associated with FC **106** and RC **108** transmissions (a function of the distance between the stations) and delays associated with the circuitry (hardware), processing, and frequency switching of the stations. It would be apparent to one skilled in the art how to calculate or measure such delay times.

10 In the present embodiment, GT **204** are placed at the beginning and end of FC **106**, RC **108** and CCA **202**. Other GT **204** arrangements, however, can be used to accommodate for aforementioned and other delays. For example, an embodiment of the invention can have GT **204** placed at the beginning and at the end of FC **106**, at the end of RC **108**, and at the end CCA **202**.

15 Figure 2B is a high level view of a full-duplex embodiment **206** of the invention. The main difference between this embodiment and the aforementioned half-duplex embodiment is that the transmission of FC **106** overlaps with the transmission of RC **108**. The transmission of FC **106**, however, does not occur during the CCA **202** phase of RC **108**. Accordingly, the transmission of FC **106** begins after the expiration of the time 20 allotted for the CCA **202** phase. As illustrated in Figure 2B, FC **106** can last for a period that equals the time remaining for the RC transmission **108**. As with half-duplex embodiments of the invention, full-duplex embodiments can utilize GT **204** to accommodate for various delays.

25 Figure 3 is a detailed view of FC **106**, RC **108**, and CCA **202** and illustrates the operation of a full-duplex embodiment of the invention **300**. Initially, Remote Stations **104** are tuned to listen to the frequency of FC **106**. After the time allotted for FC **106** expires, each Remote Station **104** re-tunes to the frequency of RC **108** and begins to listen to this channel. This marks the beginning of the CCA **202** phase.

30 In this embodiment, CCA **202** is divided into periods of time, Dwell Time (DT) of equal time duration. However, other embodiments of the invention can use DT of various time durations. As illustrated in Figure 3, in there are "n" DT periods (e.g., DT₁ **302**, DT₂

304, and DT_n 306). In general, each Remote Station 104 is dynamically assigned a particular DT period and listening occurs in a serial manner. Each Remote Station 104 listens to RC 108 during its designated DT and if during its DT the channel clear, that station can transmit data. More specifically, during the CCA 202 phase, each Remote 5 Station 104 waits until its assigned DT to listen RC 108. A first Remote Station (e.g., a Remote Station designated an identification (Id) of one) with DT₁ 302 listens first to RC 108. After the expiration of DT₁ 302, a second Remote Station (e.g., a Remote Station designated with an Id of two) listens to RC 108 for the period of DT₂ 304. Similarly, an "nth" Remote Station waits until the beginning of DT_n 306 to listen to RC 108 for that 10 DT period. A Remote Stations that has data to send to Base Station 102 does so only when that Remote Station has listened to RC 108, at its designed DT, and has ascertained that no other Remote Station 104 is transmitting (*i.e.*, that a clear channel exists). In the above example, if the first Remote Station has no data to send, that station spends DT₁ 302 listening to RC 108 and does no transmission (even if a clear channel exists).

15 The second Remote Station starts to listens to RC 108, at DT₂ 304, and assesses whether or not a clear channel condition is met. In this example, the channel is clear as the preceding Remote Station (*i.e.*, the first Remote Station) did not have any data and no other station (e.g., an "nth" Remote Station) has had the opportunity to transmit yet. If the second Remote station does not have data to transmit it listens to RC 108 during DT₂ 304 20 without any transmission over RC 108, in the same fashion as the first Remote Station. If, however, the second Remote Station does have data to transmit it does so over RC 108 immediately after the station assesses that a clear channel is present. In accordance with the invention, the second Remote Station will transmit all its data during the time allotted for this occurrence of RC 108 or until the RC expires. Once DT₂ 304 has expired, and 25 during DT_n 306, the "nth" Remote Station begins to listen to RC 108 and detects that the second Remote Station is still transmitting data. Accordingly, the "nth" Remote Station assesses that RC 108 is not a clear channel (busy) and does not transmit any data (if it had any) during this particular RC 108 period.

30 In order to ensure that all Remote Stations 104 have equal opportunity to transmit data to Base Station 102, the order of DT (e.g., 302, 304, and 306) must be changed during successive RC occurrences. Otherwise, Remote Stations 104 with a low order DT (in this example, the first and second Remote Stations) would always have a higher

priority to send data than Remote Stations with a higher order DT (in this example, the "nth" Remote Station).

Figure 4 is a detailed view of a series of FC (402, 404, 406, 408), RC (410, 412, 414), and CCA (416, 418, 420) occurrences with DT rotation, in a full-duplex embodiment 400 of the invention. After FC 402 and at the beginning of RC 410, a first Remote Station listens to the channel during DT₁ 422. Next, a second Remote Station listens during DT₂ 424 and finally an "nth" Remote Station listens during DT_n 426. The DT are then rotated in a round robin fashion for the next RC occurrence (RC 412). As illustrated in Figure 4, during RC 412, the Remote Station that listened last (in this example, the "nth" Remote Station) will listen first, as its DT_n 426 is shifted to the beginning of CCA 418. The other Remote stations DT are shifted to occur later in time by a period equal to DT_n. Over time of the operation the rotation provides each Remote Station 104 with an equal opportunity to transmit data. As would be apparent to one skilled in the art, assignment and the changing of DT order can readily be achieved with other algorithms other than the round robin schemes above. Equal access to the bandwidth is an important feature for those embodiments that support time sensitive traffic or require small and consistent delays. For instance, voice over IP requires not only small delays, but also consistent delay, because large variations of delay tend to cause jitter. Moreover, embodiments of the invention can be implemented with other DT structures. For example, one or more Remote Stations can be assigned a predetermined and fixed DT slot. With such embodiments, priority to certain Remote Stations can be achieved.

As noted above, the invention can be practiced with multiple zones. Figure 5 is a detailed view of a series of FC (502, 504, 506, 508), RC (510, 512, 514), and CCA (516, 518, 520) in a two-zone (Zone 1 and 2) embodiment 500 of the invention. In this embodiment, Remote Stations 104 assigned Id addresses 1 through 100 are configured in Zone 1 and Remote Stations assigned Id address 101 through 256 are configured in Zone 2. Remote Stations, in Zone 1, transmit at a first occurrence of a Reverse Channel (in this instance, RC 510). Remote Stations, in Zone 2, transmit at a second occurrence of the Reverse Channel (in this instance, RC 512). Thereafter, Remote Stations, in Zone 1, transmit again at the following occurrence of a Reverse Channel (in this instance, RC

514) and so forth. In this preferred embodiment, Remote Stations within a given zone only listen to the Remote Stations in their zone.

In this preferred embodiment, the changing of the DT order occurs independently in each zone and the rotation scheme disclosed above is utilized. Accordingly, DT 5 associated with Remote Stations in Zone 1 (in this instance, DT₁ 522 through DT₁₀₀ 524) are rotated at each Reverse Channel in which Zone 1 Remote Stations can transmit (in this instance, RC 510 and RC 514). Correspondingly, DT associated with Remote Stations in Zone 2 (in this instance, DT₁₀₁ 526 through DT₂₅₆ 528) are rotated at each Reverse Channel occurrence such stations are assigned to transmit (in this instance, RC 10 512).

The use of zones allows for the grouping of those Remote Stations that are close in proximity to each other. The transmission hardware (e.g., antennas) of Remote Stations is thus kept at a minimum because each Remote Stations only has to listen to those Remote Station in its assigned zones. In addition, such embodiments of the 15 invention allow the maintenance of a single Base Station in a spacious geographical area while minimizing the cost of the hardware at the Remote Stations due to their grouping in zones of smaller geographic areas.

Alternatively, Remote Stations can be grouped in zones that correspond to a type of service. Because the changing of DT occurs for each zones independently, those zones 20 having fewer Remote Stations have a higher access rate for each of their Remote Stations. For instance, Zone 1 in Figure 5 has 100 Remote Stations while Zone 2 has 155 Remote Stations. Thus, the DT of each Remote Station in Zone 1 is rotated at a faster rate than DT of a Remote Station in Zone 2. Accordingly, Remote Stations at Zone 1 will have a higher overall access rate than Remote Stations in Zone 2.

25 It would be apparent to one skilled in the art that the configuration of zones and their corresponding addresses is a matter of network design, and the methods used are well known in the art. For example, a class-C IP sub-network can be assigned to a single zone with embodiments of the invention. Alternately, IP masking can be used to assign smaller or larger IP sub-networks to zones in such embodiments.

30 Although the invention has been particularly shown and described with reference to several preferred embodiments thereof, it will be understood by those skilled in the art

that various changes in form and details may be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims.

- 13 -

What is claimed is:

1. A system, comprising:

a base station capable of providing a forward channel signal; and

5 a remote station capable of monitoring for said forward channel signal, monitoring a reverse channel during a clear channel assessment interval, and providing a reverse channel signal when said reverse channel is clear.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein said base station is capable of receiving information encoded on said reverse channel and wherein said remote station is capable of 10 receiving information encoded on said forward channel.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein said forward channel signal and said reverse channel signal include data packets.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein said data packets include digitized voice and data.

15 5. The system of claim 1, wherein said forward channel includes an address.

6. The system of claim 5, wherein said remote station is assigned a unique remote station address and wherein said remote station is capable of accepting information encoded on said forward channel when said address of said forward channel matches said assigned unique remote station address.

20 7. The system of claim 5, wherein a remote station address is assigned a priori to said remote station.

8. The system of claim 5, wherein said address is a broadcast address.

9. The system of claim 5, wherein said address is a semi-broadcast address.

10. The system of claim 5, wherein said address corresponds with an Internet 25 Protocol address.

11. The system of claim 5, wherein said address is an Internet Protocol address.

- 14 -

12. The system of claim 5, wherein said remote station is assigned a first remote station address from a first set of addresses and another remote station is assigned a second remote station address from a second set of addresses.

13. The system of claim 12, wherein said first set of address form a first zone
5 and said second set of addresses form a second zone.

14. The system of claim 5, wherein said remote station is assigned a remote station address from a set of addresses and said set of addresses form an Internet sub-network.

15. The system of claim 1, wherein said clear channel assessment interval
10 includes predetermined dwell times and wherein said remote station monitors said clear assessment channel during an assigned dwell time.

16. The system of claim 15, wherein each of said dwell times is of equal duration.

17. The system of claim 15, wherein said remote station is dynamically
15 assigned a dwell time.

18. The system of claim 17, wherein said dwell times are assigned to said remote station and another remote station in a round robin fashion.

19. The system of claim 1, wherein said forward channel signal is provided during a predetermined forward channel interval and said reverse channel signal is
20 provided during a predetermined reverse channel interval.

20. The system of claim 19, further comprising guard times among said forward channel interval, said reverse channel interval, and said clear channel assessment interval.

21. The system of claim 20, wherein said guard times are positioned at the
25 beginning and end of said forward channel interval, said reverse channel interval, and said clear channel assessment interval.

22. The system of claim 20, wherein said guard times are positioned at the beginning and end of said forward channel interval and at the end of said reverse channel interval and said clear channel assessment interval.

- 15 -

23. The system of claim 1, wherein the system is an Internet Protocol Multiple Access environment.

24. The system of claim 1, wherein said forward channel signal and said reverse channel signal are wireless signals.

5 25. The system of claim 24, wherein said forward channel signal and said reverse channel signal are modulated signals each having carrier signals with a frequency of approximately 2 GHz.

26. The system of claim 1, wherein said forward channel signal and said reverse channel signal are each electrical signals transmitted in an electrical medium.

10 27. The system of claim 1, wherein said forward channel signal and said reverse channel signal are each optical signals transmitted in an optical medium.

28. The system of claim 1, wherein said forward channel signal and reverse channel signal are half-duplex signals.

15 29. The system of claim 1, wherein said forward channel signal and reverse channel signal are full-duplex signals.

30. The system of claim 1, wherein said base station is capable of synchronizing with said remote station.

31. The system of claim 30, wherein said base station uses broadcast control packets for synchronization.

20 32. A method for a single-point to a fixed multi-point system having a base station and a plurality of remote stations, the method comprising the step of:

transmitting from the base station a forward channel signal;

monitoring for said forward channel signal at each of the plurality of remote stations; and

25 monitoring a reverse channel at each of the plurality of remote stations, wherein each of the plurality of remote stations monitors at an assigned predetermined time within a clear assessment interval,

- 16 -

if said reverse channel is clear during an assigned predetermined time associated with one of the plurality of remote stations and said one of the plurality remote stations has information to send the base station, transmitting a reverse channel signal from said one of the plurality of remote stations.

5 33. The method of claim 32, wherein said forward channel signal has data information and address information.

10 34. The method of claim 33, further comprising the steps of assigning a unique remote station address to each of the plurality of remote stations and accepting said data information at one of the plurality of remote stations when said address matches an unique address of said one of the plurality of remote stations.

35. The method of claim 34, wherein said step of assigning unique remote address is done a priori.

36. The method of claim 33, wherein said address information is a broadcast address.

15 37. The method of claim 33, wherein said address information is an Internet Protocol address.

20 38. The method of claim 33, further comprising the steps of assigning a first remote station address from a first set of addresses to one of the plurality of remote stations and assigning a second remote station address from a second set of addresses to another of the plurality of remote stations.

39. The method of claim 38, wherein said first set of address form a first zone and said second set of addresses form a second zone.

40. The method of claim 33, wherein said forward channel signal and said reverse channel signal include data packets.

25 41. The method of claim 40, wherein said data packets include digitized voice and data.

42. The method of claim 32, wherein said predetermined time is a dwell time and said channel assessment interval is partitioned into dwell times.

- 17 -

43. The method of claim 42, wherein each of said dwell times is of equal duration.

44. The method of claim 42, further comprising the step of dynamically assigning dwell times to each of the plurality of remote stations.

5 45. The method of claim 44, wherein said dwell times are assigned in a round robin fashion.

46. The method of claim 32, wherein said forward channel signal is provided during a predetermined forward channel interval and said reverse channel signal is provided during a predetermined reverse channel interval.

10 47. The method of claim 46, further comprising the step of providing guard times among said forward channel interval, said reverse channel interval, and said clear channel assessment interval.

15 48. The method of claim 47, wherein said guard times are positioned at the beginning and end of said forward channel interval, said reverse channel interval, and said clear channel assessment interval.

49. The method of claim 32, wherein the system is used in an Internet Protocol Multiple Access environment.

50. The method of claim 32, wherein said forward channel signal and said reverse channel signal are wireless signals.

20 51. The method of claim 32, wherein said forward channel signal and reverse channel signal are half-duplex signals.

52. The method of claim 32, wherein said forward channel signal and reverse channel signal are full-duplex signals.

25 53. The method of claim 32, further comprising the step of synchronizing the base station with the plurality of remote stations.

54. The method of claim 53, wherein broadcast control packets are used for synchronization.

55. A single-point to a fixed multi-point system, comprising:

base station means for transmitting a forward channel signal; and

- 18 -

remote station means for monitoring for said forward channel signal, monitoring a reverse channel at an assigned predetermined time within a clear assessment interval, and transmitting a reverse channel signal wherein said means transmits said reverse channel signal after detecting that said reverse channel is clear during said 5 predetermined time.

56. The system of claim 55, wherein said forward channel signal has data information and address information.

57. The system of claim 56, wherein said remote station means has a unique remote station address and said remote station means accepts said data information when 10 said address information matches said unique address.

58. The system of claim 56, wherein said remote station means has a first remote station address from a first set of addresses and a second remote station means has a second remote station address from a second set of addresses.

59. The system of claim 57, wherein said first set of address form a first zone 15 and said second set of addresses form a second zone.

60. The system of claim 56, wherein said address information is a broadcast address.

61. The system of claim 56, wherein said forward channel signal and said reverse channel signal include data packets.

62. The system of claim 55, wherein said predetermined time is a dwell time 20 and said channel assessment interval is partitioned into dwell times.

63. The system of claim 55, wherein said forward channel signal is provided during a predetermined forward channel interval and said reverse channel signal is provided during a predetermined reverse channel interval.

64. The system of claim 63, further including guard times among said forward channel interval, said reverse channel interval, and said clear channel assessment interval. 25

65. The system of claim 64, wherein the system is used in an Internet Protocol Multiple Access environment.

- 19 -

66. The system of claim 55, wherein said forward channel signal and said reverse channel signal are wireless signals.

67. The system of claim 55, wherein said forward channel signal and reverse channel signal are full-duplex signals.

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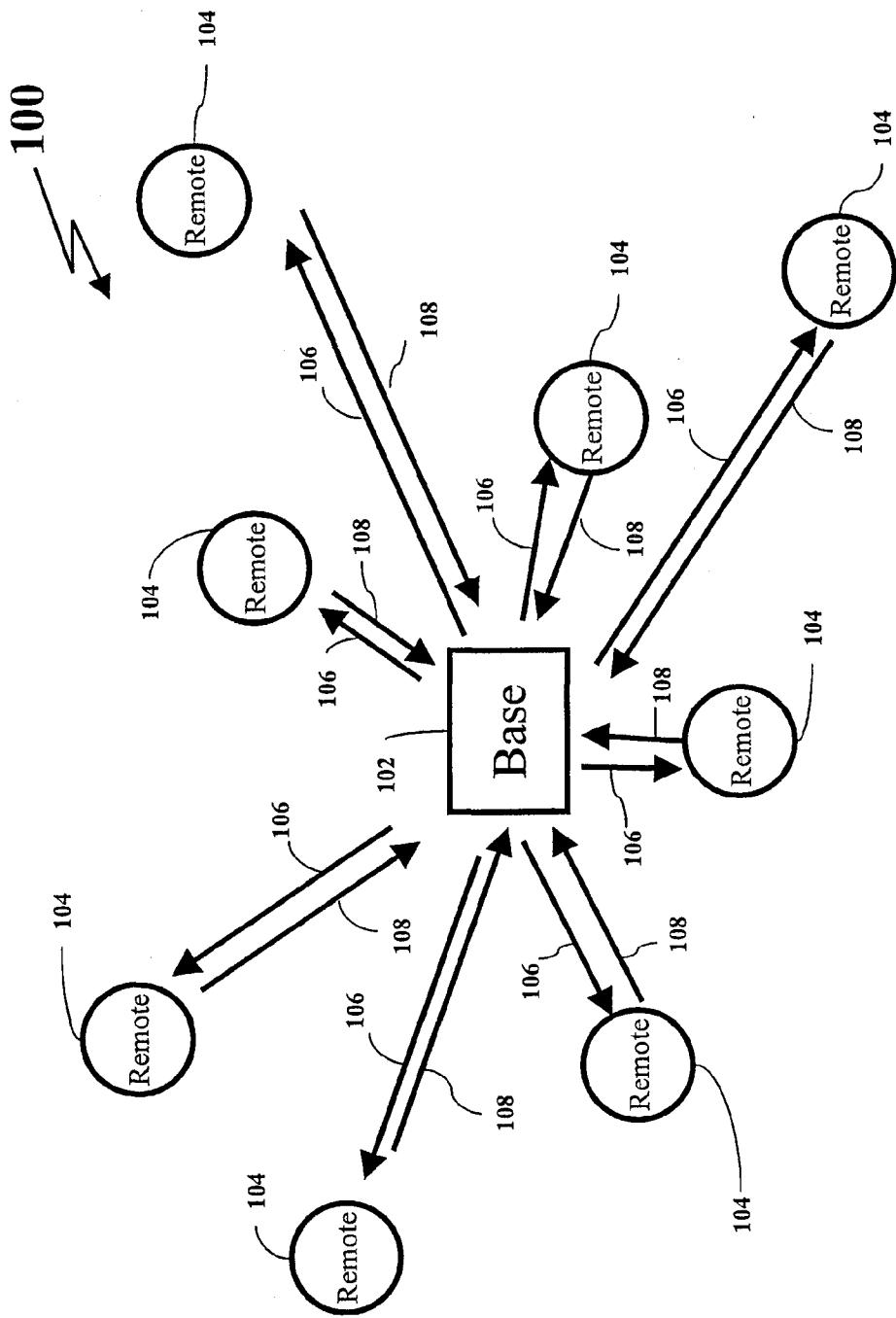


Figure 1

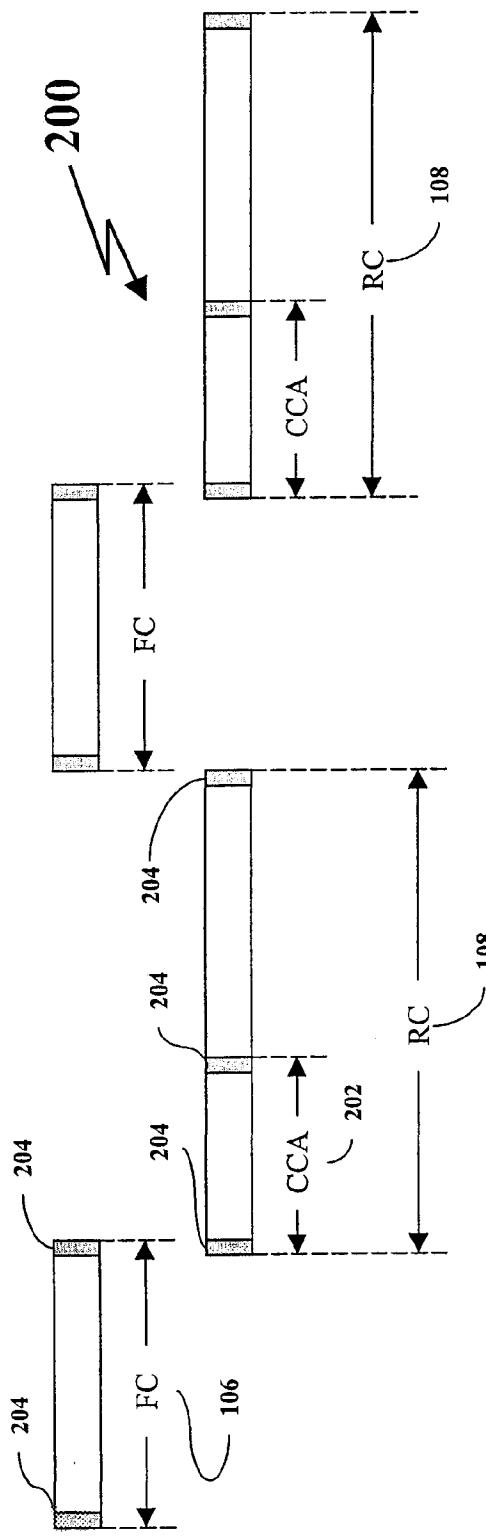


Figure 2A

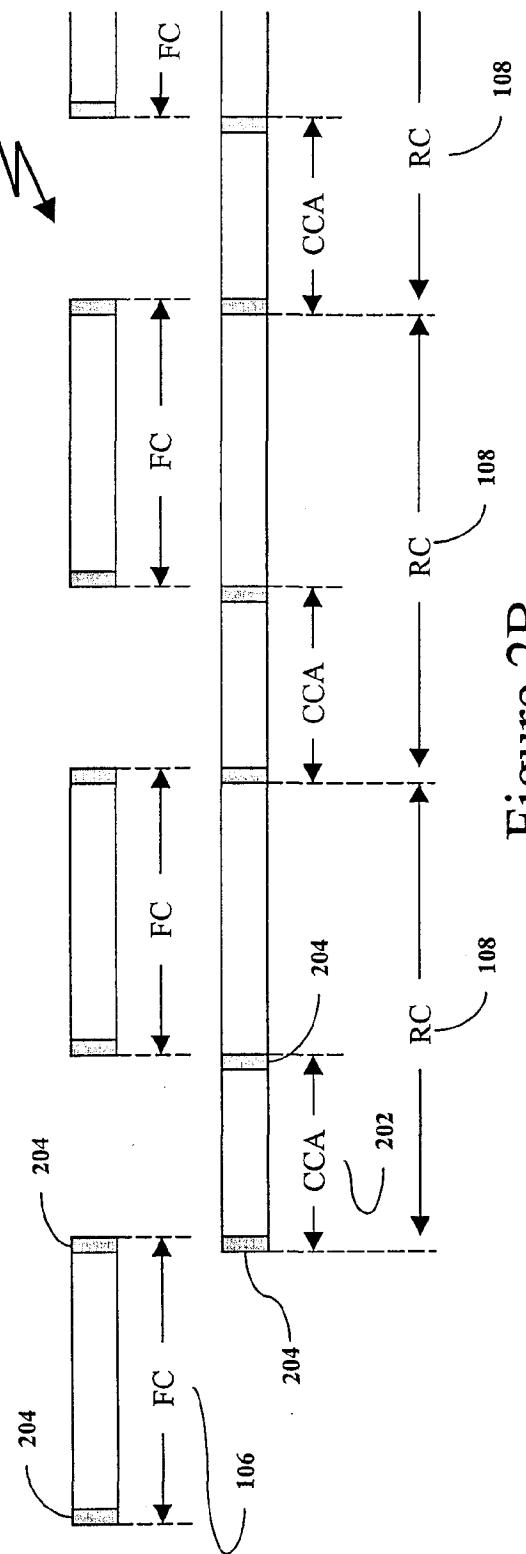


Figure 2B

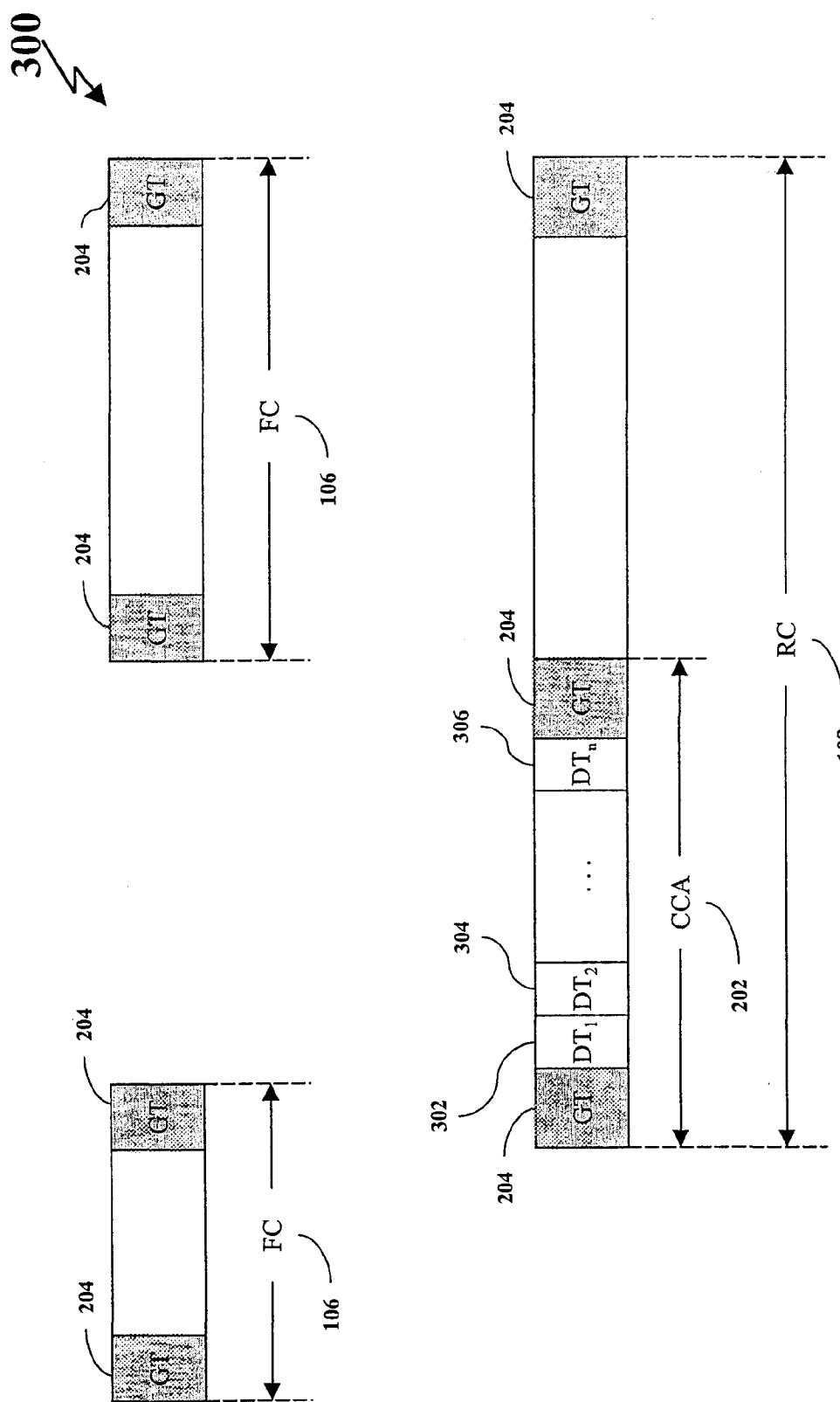


Figure 3

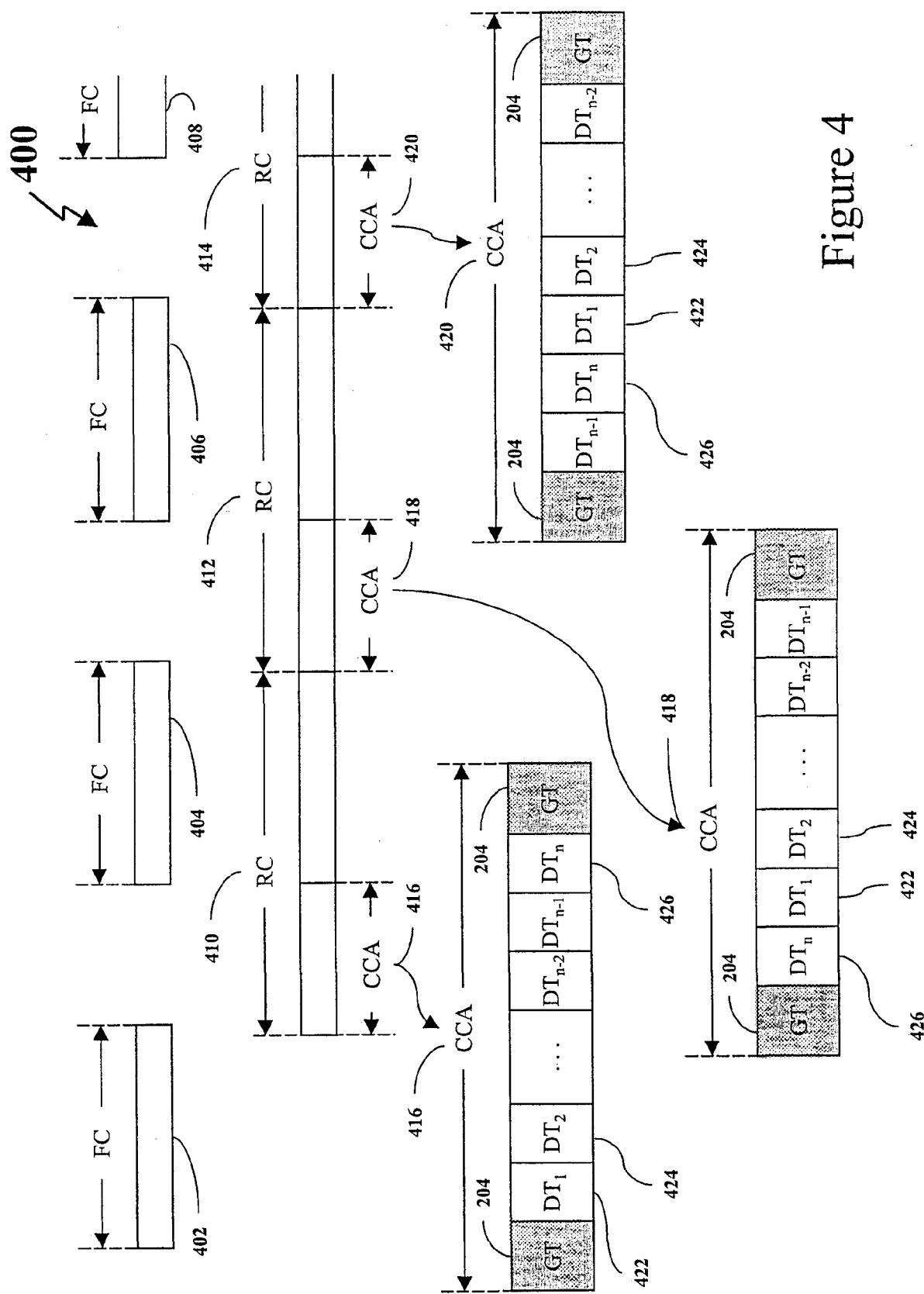


Figure 4

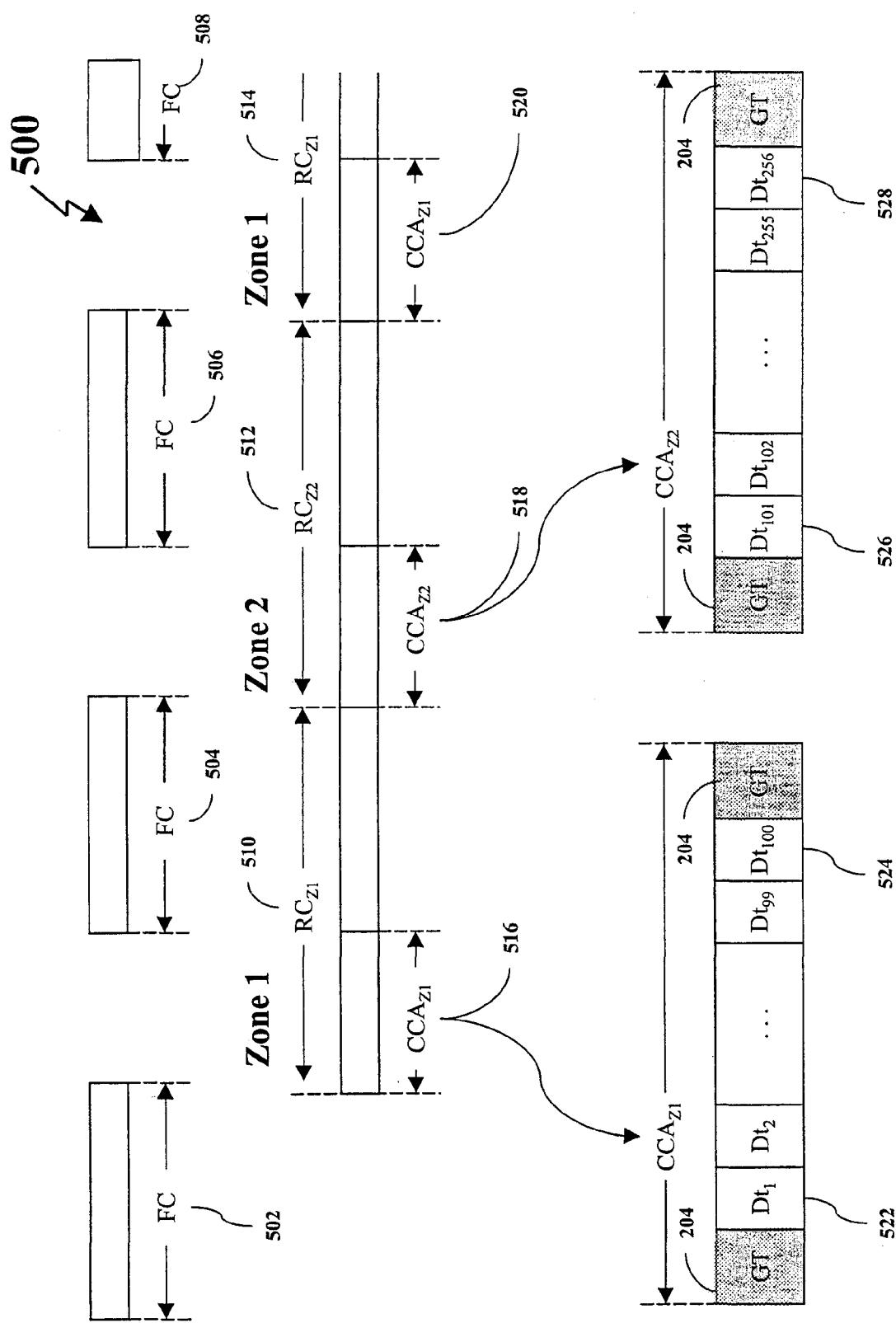


Figure 5

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(74) Agent: CARRANO, Cono, A.; Brobeck, Phleger & Harrison, LLP, Intellectual Property Dpt., Suite 800, 1333 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005 (US).

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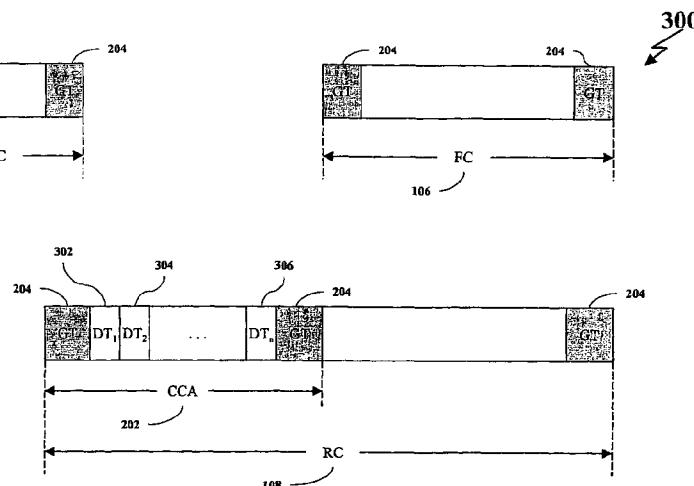
(71) Applicant: EMBEDDED WIRELESS (INTERNATIONAL) LIMITED [US/US]; Suite 1105, 88 Howard Street, San Francisco, CA 94105 (US).

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(72) Inventor: MARGON, Kenneth; 5100 McDonell Avenue, Oakland, CA 94619 (US).



(54) Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR SINGLE-POINT TO FIXED-MULTIPOINT DATA COMMUNICATION



WO 00/41543 A3

(57) Abstract: Systems and methods for single-point to fixed-multipoint communication. The invention dynamically allocates bandwidth based on traffic demands, thus providing efficient bandwidth utilization, particularly with bursty or time sensitive data traffic. A system includes a Base Station and a plurality of Remote Stations. The Base Station transmits information to the Remote Stations via a Forward Channel and the Remote Stations transmit information via a Reverse Channel. Before transmitting on the Reverse Channel, each of the Remote Stations listens (monitors) the Reverse Channel to ascertain whether any other Remote Station is transmitting. Remote Stations transmit data only when a Remote Station determines that the channel is clear. The Remote Stations listen in sequential order, eliminating the probability of collisions caused by simultaneous transmissions from Remote Stations. The data traffic is accordingly aggregated, thus providing efficient bandwidth utilization.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/US 00/00844

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 7 H04L12/56 H04L12/28

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
IPC 7 H04L H04Q

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

WPI Data, PAJ, EPO-Internal, INSPEC

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Y	abstract column 1, line 6 -column 4, line 63 column 6, line 7 - line 13	4, 8, 10-13, 20, 23, 26, 27, 31, -/-

Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

Patent family members are listed in annex.

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

18 October 2000

Date of mailing of the international search report

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Inte	onal Application No
PCT/US 00/00844	

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
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Y	page 1, line 5 -page 4, line 14	4,8, 10-13, 17,18, 20,23, 27,31, 36-39, 41,44, 45,47, 49,54, 58-60,64
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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Inte	onal Application No
PCT/US 00/00844	

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
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A	abstract column 1, line 13 -column 4, line 32 column 5, line 30 - line 59 claims 1,10	1,5,32, 33,55-57
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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
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C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Inte	onal Application No
PCT/US 00/00844	

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
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A	-----	1,19,21, 22,32, 46,48, 55,63,65

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US 00/00844

Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. Claims Nos.: because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:

2. Claims Nos.: because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:

3. Claims Nos.: because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

see additional sheet

1. As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.

2. As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.

3. As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:

4. No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest

The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.

No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

This International Searching Authority found multiple (groups of) inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. Claims: 1-16, 19, 23-43, 46, 49-63, 66, 67,
as far as relating to the first invention

A system providing for remote station access to a reverse channel, where remote stations monitor said reverse channel during predetermined and assigned monitoring intervals, where said stations access said reverse channel when said channel is clear, and where different stations are assigned addresses from different sets of allocatable addresses.

2. Claims: 1, 15, 17, 18, 32, 42, 44, 45,
as far as relating to the second invention

A system providing for remote station access to a reverse channel, where remote stations monitor said reverse channel during predetermined and assigned monitoring intervals, where said stations access said reverse channel when said channel is clear, and where said predetermined monitoring intervals are dynamically allocated.

3. Claims: 1, 19-22, 32, 46-48, 55, 63-65,
as far as relating to the third invention

A system providing for remote station access to a reverse channel, where remote stations monitor said reverse channel during predetermined and assigned monitoring intervals, where said stations access said reverse channel when said channel is clear, and where specific guard times are used between different intervals;

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/US 00/00844

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